



Governor Janet Napolitano

State of Arizona Department of Homeland Security



Director Leesa Berens Morrison

Arizona Participates In National Counterterrorism Exercise

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Gov. Janet Napolitano and Arizona Department of Homeland Security Director Leesa Berens Morrison today announced that Arizona will conduct its most comprehensive and largest counterterrorism exercise ever Oct. 15-19.

TOPOFF 4 (short for Top Officials), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, will require officials from across the state to respond to a simulated terror attack involving a radiological dispersal device or "dirty bomb." **It is important to note that this is an exercise only that will not be visible to the public and will have no effect on Arizona's transportation systems.**

The fourth in a series of congressionally mandated exercises, TOPOFF 4 involves hundreds of Arizona participants from more than 40 federal agencies, 26 state agencies, 11 counties, 15 local jurisdictions, three tribes, four volunteer agencies and 37 organizations from the private sector.

It is the culmination of two years of statewide planning and exercises.

"TOPOFF is proving to be extremely beneficial because it will help us to prepare for next year's Super Bowl in Glendale," said Gov. Janet Napolitano. "We will put our preparedness to a thorough test -- at every level, from the local to the state to the federal. This is a unique opportunity for us to ensure we are ready for the most high profile sporting event in the world."

Arizona Department of Homeland Security Director Leesa Berens Morrison added: "It will challenge our ability to respond to a devastating attack, and test our ability to communicate between state, federal, local and tribal agencies, and the private sector."

In addition to Arizona, Oregon, the U.S. Territory of Guam, and three international partners – Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom – are playing in TOPOFF 4. They also will conduct simultaneous, related exercises.

"TOPOFF stresses our preparedness and response systems with situations that no single agency or jurisdiction could handle on its own," said Bill Schwinn, of the federal Department of Homeland Security.

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TOPOFF 4

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“The right response actually takes thousands of individuals working together. This exercise is about strengthening working relationships within our partners in federal, state and local agencies, emergency management communities and private industry groups. It’s about increasing preparedness by sharing information and processes,” Schwinn said.

The San Marcos Hotel in Chandler will serve as the hub for the exercise, although related activities will be occurring across the state.

To reach the overarching goal and objectives to enhance interagency coordination, planning and preparedness, TOPOFF 4 will focus on five key areas:

- **Prevention:** To test the handling and flow of operational and time-critical intelligence between agencies to prevent a terrorist attack.
- **Intelligence/investigation:** To test the handling and flow of operational and time-critical intelligence between agencies prior to, and in response to, a linked terrorist incident.
- **Incident management:** To test the full range of existing procedures for domestic incident management of a terrorist weapon of mass destruction event and to improve the top officials’ capabilities to respond consistent with the National Response Plan and the National Incident Management System.
- **Public Information:** To practice the strategic coordination of media relations and public information in the context of a terrorist weapon of mass destruction event or incident of national significance.
- **Evaluation:** To identify lessons learned and promote best practices.

For more information on TOPOFF 4, visit the Department of Homeland Security Web site at www.dhs.gov/topoff4.

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